

The First Congregational Church
(United Church of Christ)
Canton Center, Connecticut

November 30, 2008

10:00 AM

THE FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT

CHIMES

INTERESTS OF THE FELLOWSHIP

PRELUDE: "Prepare the Royal Highway" -arr. Burkhardt

CHORAL INTROIT

CALL TO WORSHIP: (**responsively**)

Awake, people of God, and stay alert for Christ's coming.

Grace to you and peace from God who sent Jesus to us.

Make your ways known to us, O God,

Show us once more your awesome presence.

We are all God's people; no one is excluded.

Come together as God's family for worship and prayer.

Let the mountains quake before you, mighty God.

Let the nations tremble in awe and reverence.

Praise the One who grants us the gift of life.

Give thanks for God's continuing faithfulness.

Heaven and earth will pass away,

But the Word of God is true for all times and places.

*HYMN 119 (*Chalice*) "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

THE LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE: **HOPE**

Candle Lighters: The Robinson Family

Readings

Unison Prayer:

God, we thank you that Jesus brought hope into our world. By the good news of the Bible you are still bringing hope to people. Help us to be a source of hope to people everywhere who live in poverty of body, mind or spirit. Amen.

HYMN (seated) "One Candle Is Lit"

Come surely, Lord Jesus, as dawn follows night,

Our hearts long to greet you, as roses, the light.

Salvation, draw near us, our vision engage.

One candle is lit for the hope of the age.

CHILDREN'S MESSAGE

OFFERTORY: "Rejoice Greatly, O Daughter of Zion" -Kosche
Senior Choir

*DOXOLOGY (*Chalice* #46)

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION: (in **unison**)

Gracious God, we give our best to you, not out of guilt or fear, but with gratitude and faith. You have been our support in times of need. Every breath we take is a gift from you. We would be awake and watchful for opportunities to make a difference, to help others be alert for your presence, to value life in all its fullness, and to learn to care. We dedicate these symbols of thankfulness, and all the days of our lives to those purposes. Amen.

*HYMN 125 (*Chalice*) "Come, O Long-Expected Jesus"
**Church School children may pass to their classrooms
when the congregation begins singing.**

A MOMENT OF SILENCE FOR PERSONAL REFLECTION
followed by the PASTORAL PRAYER and
THE LORD'S PRAYER (in **unison**, using debts and debtors)

*HYMN 138 (*Chalice*) "Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn"

SCRIPTURE: Matthew 13:24-37 (Pew Bibles, N.T. p. 13)

SERMON: "WAKE UP!"

*HYMN 135 (*Chalice*) "Blessed Be the God of Israel"

*BENEDICTION

*RESPONSE

*POSTLUDE: "Prepare Thyself, Zion" -J.S. Bach/arr. Wagner

(*All who are able, please stand)

The Rev. Susan M. Prichard	Interim Minister
Sarah W. LeGeyt	Director of Christian Education & Youth
Mary Lou Keefe	Organist; Director of Music
Barbara Lowell and Matt Solomon	Duty Deacons
Linda Lareau	Duty Trustee
Lydia Petersen and Jane Seccombe	Greeters
Junior High Class	Coffee Hour Hosts

THE FLOWERS today are given in memory of Henry LeGeyt by his family.

WE CORDIALLY WELCOME those who are visitors to this church and to this morning's worship service. Please sign the guest book in the vestibule. Or, fill in a Friendship Card found in the pews. Also found with the Friendship Cards are Pew Envelopes. Please feel free to use them for any donation.

NURSERY CARE is available in the lower level of the Parish House for infants through 2 years old.

LARGE PRINT COPIES of today's bulletin are available on the ushers' tables in the back of the church. Large print editions of the Chalice Hymnal are also available for use during worship.

PLEASE JOIN US in the Parish Hall after worship today for a time for refreshment and fellowship.

Please see bulletin insert for announcements

ANNOUNCEMENTS – SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 30, 2008

MANY THANKS to Ellen Potter and her family for hanging the wreaths and lighting the windows of our meeting house for the holidays.

WE ARE GRATEFUL to the Humphrey Family who donates the church's Christmas tree in memory of Harry Humphrey. Thanks to Sam Humphrey and his family for putting up and lighting the tree. Hanging on the tree you will find "scrolls" and "stars" that describe the gift wishes of children and families in need. More "permanent" decorations will be new "winter woollies" (i.e. hats, scarves, mittens, gloves for children or adults) that anyone may bring and hang on the tree. After Christmas, those items will be delivered to needy local people and to the Charles Hall Youth Services in North Dakota. Please feel free to extend holiday wishes to our church family by hanging a Christmas card on the church tree.

ADVENT RESOURCE BOOKLETS for families are available on the information table in the Parish House. Please help yourself.

CHERUB CHOIR today, 11:15 AM; **JUNIOR CHOIR** today, 11:30 AM, in the Music Room.

PAGEANT ENSEMBLE will **not** rehearse today.

TRANS-SIBERIAN ORCHESTRA CONCERT: Today, 3:00 PM at the XL Center, Hartford.

COMING UP

ORDER POINSETTIA PLANTS next Sunday Dec. 7th and 14th to decorate our sanctuary for the Christmas services. Dedicate a memorial poinsettia plant to a loved one, in honor of someone special, or in celebration of a special occasion. Phone orders are welcome as well; please call Polly Rice 651-7813 or Ellen Potter 693-2391. The cost per plant is \$9.00. A check payment should be made to the church. If you have any questions, please call Ellen Potter 693-2391. The plants will decorate the worship services on December 21, and 24. Please leave your poinsettia until *after the 7:30 service* on December 24.

Announcements, November 30, 2008, continued

ADVENT POTLUCK AND WORKSHOP with crafts and activities: Next Sunday, Dec. 7, after worship. Sign up on the kitchen door.

HONOR COURT is hosted by our church Monday in Hartford.

SENIOR CHOIR: Monday, 7:00 PM.

BIBLE STUDY: Tuesday, 10:30 AM; "Confronting Evil: Tel Beth Shemesh."

DIACONATE: Tuesday, 7:00 PM.

BELL CHOIR: Thursday, 7:00 PM.

JYF BOWLING at Blue Fox Rock 'n' Bowl is Friday, December 5, from 7-9 P.M. Cost is \$15 per person and includes bowling, shoe rental, pizza and soda. Please sign up on the JYF board and bring a completed permission slip to the office by Dec. 3.

CONFIRMATION CLASS meets next Sunday, Dec. 7, at 9:00 AM to prepare wreaths for pick-up. They will share in the Advent Potluck and then attend a class session.

CHRISTMAS WREATHS, ordered from the Confirmation Class, will be available for pick-up next Sunday, Dec. 7, after worship.

PRIME TIMERS meet on Wednesday, December 10, at 11:00 AM in the Parish Hall for a Christmas potluck luncheon that will be served at 11:30. The Canton High School Chamber Singers are scheduled to arrive at 11:15 AM and present a musical program.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR! PAGEANT DRESS REHEARSAL is Saturday, December 13, at 9:00 AM.

WARNING of a special meeting of the congregation to be held on Sunday, December 14, 2008, after worship, to vote on the 2009 Operating Budget proposed by the Board of Trustees.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES will be held at 6:00 P.M. and 7:30 PM on Wednesday, December 24. The 6:00 PM service will be the shorter of the two, being more geared for families with young children. Both services, however, will conclude with the traditional candle light ceremony and the singing of "Silent Night."